LOST

Lovers Three Years Ago, They Become Strangers

By Fanny Heaslip Lea

"REMEMBER," THE MAN WAS SAYING, "WE ALWAYS PLANNED TO DO IT JUST THIS WAY."

"FARE, please! Fare, please! Lady, fare!" Out of a grayish mist of her own inamgings, Mimi Wood came back to the familiar plaint at her elbow. She murmured a guilty regret. The bus conducter nearly smiled. He passed her, ingulfing her dime in his passing.

Mimi settled back into her seat, back into a vapor of gloom, with Fifth avenue, pinnacled and battlemented against a daffodil sunset, unrolling itself before her.

Mimi was remembering that when she had left the apartment—that morning—she had intended to be back by 5 o'clock, in order to have her husband's dinner smoking upon the plate when his key turned in the lock. It was much nearer 6 than 5, and Kirk's dinner, what there was of it, yet reposed in the icebox. Yesterday's roast to be revamped into a stew. Tinned pears for salad. Cold potatoes for frying.

Kirk was inextricably involved in Mimi's mind, most days, with things like that—Kirk, who only three years before had stood for all there was in life of beauty and delight.

Kirk, who had whispered to her before the altar, "My golden girl—here's a golden ring for you!" Kirk, who now snapped at her crossly between bits of his insufficiently buttered toast. "Gosh, it isn't much to ask of a woman—a decent cup of coffee in the morning, before a man gets off to work!"

If it wasn't the coffee, it was a hole in his sock—or a tie he couldn't find, or Mimi slept too late or work too early. Their mornings were petty battlefields, futile sparrings—that or sulky, stupid silences.

Mimi had been thrilled to the core, three years ago, at the thought of an apartment of her own—her own and Kirk's. But somehow the man with whom she was now living in that apartment wasn't the man who had taken her there one heavenly night in October—and kissed her in every room of it by way of presenting the keys of the city.

She wondered sometimes if Kirk's chief—the head of the firm of architects with whom he worked—found him as changed as she did. Probably not. Kirk had had a raise each year. Probably his work went on exactly the same. It was only at home, very likely, that he was different.

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IF any one had told Mimi, three years before, that the idylic thing which she and Kirk called love—the exquisite, palpitant, glowing dream in which they had come together and sworn eternal faith—if any one had told her that it could degenerate into the bloodless warfare of her present existence—Mimi would have laughed.

She laughed now, in a way, sitting up on top of the bus, watching the traffic stream either side of the traffic towers. That is, her mouth twitched, but her eyes were stormy.

She had been away from the apartment all day—who wouldn't, after that morning's scene!

Kirk had been insufferable, sarcastic over trifles, caustic because the top of the dressing table had a bit of powder on it. Women, he had suggested, didn't know the meaning of order, system, ordinary decent tidiness. He hadn't looked to see that the dresser drawers were in a state of meticulous neatness. Mimi had spent half the day before arranging them. It hadn't left her time to clean the top of the darned thing. She didn't explain—naturally. She wasn't going to crawl for any bad-tempered, short-sighted idiot!

So she flung herself out of the place before 11, in her old blue-twill frock, in a horrid old last-year's hat, without even stopping to cry. Had lunched downtown in a fine, cold fury of loneliness, gone to a silly, sloppy movie, still alone, suffered every wail of the over-sweet violins, like a touch on a raw nerve—and here she was going back home again—if you liked to call it that!—no happier, no calmer, no more reconciled than when she had slammed the door of the living room behind her that morning.

She knew how it would be. Kirk would come in tired and grouchy. Dinner wouldn't be ready. Or she wouldn't have anything he liked. She'd say something catty. He'd retort with a nervous sneer. Marriage—was that what people made of it? And there were fools who didn't believe in divorce!

Divorce—a blind alarm fluttered in Mimi's breast, as if some one had shown her the steel-blue eye of a gun or the steel-gray streak of a knife. Even the word had power to terrify her. Of course, whatever was the matter with her and Kirk, it wasn't quite that sort of thing yet.

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SHE came out of a mist of revulsion, staring at the hand of the man in front of her, rather a nice hand, gray-gloved and long-fingered, lying along the back of the seat, just touching the gray crepe shoulder fitting so confidently against his own.

Not the usual bus-philanderers; rather too well turned out for that. The small, gray hat above the gray crepe shoulder trailed a slight but knowing feather, covered a wave of burnished bronze, shaded a peachy cheek adorably flushed, at the moment, by something her companion was saying. The sort of thing to make another woman in everyday blue feel fearfully shabby. Mimi felt it—resentfully. Leaning forward, she took stock of the man in a swift glance. Nice eyes, nice mouth, nice chin. A correct tie. A proper collar. Rather radiantly correct. Proper, with a sort of beautiful scrupulousness.

His voice carried to Mimi's eavesdropping ears, a deep voice with a caressing inflection.

"Is it—everything you thought it'd be, dear?"

"More!" said the gray girl. "Oh, my dear—more!"

"Newlyweds!" thought Mimi in a sudden flare of understanding and smiled a scornful little smile of her own. But she listened, contemptuous or not.

"Remember?" the man was saying. "We always planned to do it just this way. Riding up the avenue, about sunset, together. You will admit now dreams do come true!"

"Isn't it heavenly!" sighed the gray girl.

Her low words were harder to catch. Mimi had to strain for them.

"See that Spanish shawl in the window down there?"

"Want it?"

She murmured, lifting and dropping her lashes swiftly, "I don't want anything in the world I haven't got!"

"Sweetest!" said the man. "We'll get anything in the world you want—or die trying!"

"Don't! Don't even laugh—about dying."

"Sorry—superstitious child!"

"I cant bear it, this evening."

"Funny," said the man, so quietly that eyes less keen and ears less sharp than Mimi's might have fancied he spoke of the weather. "Funny how long we've been waiting for this evening! Are you happy—now it's here?"

"Happy, happy, happy!" on a whisper of delicious laughter. Then, more clearly, "Mac, did you give the minister—something?"

"Not so much as he deserved—but something. Yes'm."

"You're such a darling, absent-minded old thing, I didn't know."

"Can be as absent-minded as I like now, with you a'one-side."

"Don't be too sure! I shan't like it the first time you forget me."

"That'll be some sixty-odd years from now."

"Mac, don't laugh—about growing old! I can't bear that either, with you and me going home—to your apartment—for the first time."

Mimi thought, with a little, leaping thrill at her heart, "They've just been married this afternoon. What an adorable, silly wedding journey, on top of a Fifth avenue bus!"

The gray girl was saying primly: "You haven't given me my marriage lines yet. Did you know it?"

"I've got 'em," said the man, "in my most confidential pocket. We'll take 'em on the honeymoon."

She laughed softly. "Do you suppose any one ever behaved like this—before?"

"I think it's extremely wise, myself," said the man, with a humorous twist of his nice mouth. "Why wait around separately when we might just as well wait together? Besides, by the time I can get away from the office and we do start off on the honeymoon you'll know how many lumps of sugar I take in my coffee, and a lot of other important things about me. Thus avoiding rows."

"We're never going to have 'em!" said the gray girl. "Are we?"

"Never, dear!" said the man.

"Promise, Mac!"

"Do I have to promise? I mean, do I need to? This evening?"

Mimi couldn't hear what the gray girl answered. It wasn't, after all, so far as one could see, much of a spoken answer, rather a lifting of ardent eyes, the quiver of a tender mouth, a small, quickly withdrawn gesture of a caressing hand.

"Oh, Mac!" sighed the gray girl. "Keep your fingers crossed—darling!"

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MIMI rang for the next corner, her own, and climbed down with a hot, queer feeling behind her eyelids. She hated to leave the man and the girl. She wanted to go on and see where his apartment would be. On Riverside? And would the gray girl find roses there waiting for her—heaps of them? There had been roses waiting for Mimi, the night Kirk had taken her home.

All at once Mimi quickened her steps to a little, reckless run. The watch on her wrist showed a quarter of 6. Kirk rarely came home half-after 6, more often a quarter of 7. He had been working very hard. He was more apt to be late. There was still time for a decent sort of dinner, with any luck.

The flower shop at the corner had roses in the window, tea-roses, extravagantly frail. Mimi, for all her haste, stopped long enough to buy a dewy handful with a lacy frond or so of fern, then fled homeward through the sunset.

Arrived once more at her own dressing table—her own powder-smeared, beloved dressing-table—she cast off her hat and gloves, ran a comb through her soft, brown hair so that it fell in shining waves above her ears—swept a powder-puff over cheeks and chin.

She wanted to change her gown—the old blue twill needed badly a fresh frill at the neck—but there wasn't time.

She flung herself out of the bedroom and charged upon ice-box and stove like a small, wistful fury.

Stew—of all nights in the world! Nothing but stew with which to convey to Kirk that she was sorry she had been hateful, that she knew her temper had got the best of her, that in her heart she loved him truly, that she was going to be good, that she wanted him back again—wanted him dreadfully. Still, when stew was all one had . . .

Mushrooms came mercifully to light in a forgotten tin behind the breadbox. Kirk liked mushrooms. And mayonnaise masked the tinned pears.

There wasn't any lettuce. Mimi said fiercely to herself that if she had been the woman Kirk thought her when he married her, there would have been lettuce, crisp and cool, in a wet napkin upon the ice.

She did all that was humanly possible with the cold potatoes, by way of a bit of cheese and a heaven-sent dab of white sauce discovered in coy retreat behind a plate of delicatessen ham.

She set the table with reckless haste—a fresh cloth, her prettiest—the roses in a low shining bowl of black glass—two plates, two knives, two forks, two spoons—

What heaven that homely ritual—two plates, two knives, two forks, two spoons—had once spelled for her!

Mimi wondered—with a suddenly uneven heart-beat she wondered—if Mac and the gray girl were getting supper together now, in that apartment of his in which they were going to wait—together—until the day of their belated honeymoon should arrive. Only three years ago, Mimi and Kirk . . .

Mimi choked back a sob.

What did the gray girl have that Mimi hadn't had—to begin with? What was Mac that Kirk hadn't been—three years ago?

Kirk—when he didn't ruin his keen black eyes with a scowl—his beautiful sensitive mouth with a sneer—was better looking, oh, by far! than Mac.

She had thought to herself more than once in those first mad days, "Romeo must have been like this!" That was how she had thought of him then. He had had a way of smiling at her, worshiping—adoringly tender.

Where had it all gone? Where—and when—and, in the name of all lost heavens, how?

No one had meant to be faithfuller than Mimi. No one had ever sworn to be truer than Kirk.

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A QUARTER to seven. He was going to be late, as she had hoped. For once she wanted him to be late. She wanted time to have the table perfect, his coffee just strong enough. Coffee! She hadn't made the coffee!

At the back of Mimi's mind an aching thought persisted: "It's me! It's my own fault that we've got away from everything like this. I haven't tried hard enough. He's come home tired and nervous and edgy from working—for me—and I've been cross with him. I haven't held up my end of the line. If we've strayed out of the lovely place we were in, it's more my fault than anybody's. But oh, I'd give my soul to get back! To have Kirk look at me the way the man on the bus looked . . . at the girl in gray! He used to. Kirk used to! He had a lovely smile. Funny—I'm talking as if he were dead! . . . Well—he might as well be. I might as well be, too, if we don't mean any more to each other than we did this morning. Just a man and a woman—tied together—snapping and snarling—and we used to believe——"

She set her soft mouth hard to stop its trembling. She measured coffee into the top of the pot and water into the bottom of it. She lit another burner and set the pot above it.

Then she lifted the lid from the bubbling stew and leaned to stir it. Steam arose in an airy mist. Not for nothing had Mimi ransacked her cupboard; it was a good steam, a tantalizing steam.

She thought, absurdly relieved: "It's going to be all right. Kirk'll like it! I'll just about have time to powder my nose now, before he comes in."

She turned and the lid clattered from the stew-pot to the floor, by which, all at once, she was aware of badly shaking hands.

"I'm like somebody groping for something she's lost—feeling around in the dark—trying to get love back with mushrooms in a stew. I don't care! There must be a way."

Lid retrieved, she stirred and peered into the pot once more, murmured like an enchantress above a love-philter. But all she said was—surprisingly: "God—You know I've lost him. Give him back to me—please!"

And all she stirred into the mess was a tear, which slid glittering down one cheek before she could dash it away.

Steps in the living room, steps passing the table with its unaccustomed grace of roses in a black glass bowl. Kirk's voice from the kitchen doorway, a rather tired voice with a vague touch of irritation:

"Gosh, it's hot in here! Dinner not ready yet?"

Mimi faced him swiftly, crimsoning to her hair; stifled a sharp retort that in that moment's surprise almost winged its way to freedom. "Hello," she said at last. "I didn't hear you come in. Go on and sit down. I'll have it on the table in half a second."

"About 7, now!" Kirk muttered.

He cast a dark, dissatisfied glance about the kitchen and turned away. A tall, slim, almost romantic-looking young man, Kirk, with a wickedly irascible line between his level, black brows, a dogged set to the corners of his nervously handsome mouth.

When Mimi brought in a dish and set it down on the table before him, he shifted the evening paper, in which he was already deeply absorbed, glanced down, and observed with weary resignation:

"Stew again?"

"Oh, but this is a good one, Kirk," said Mimi coaxingly.

He assured her from behind his newspaper, "I know—they all are."

Mimi set her teeth to keep back the barbed reply with which habit supplied her. She said, almost pleadingly, "I've got potatoes—and a salad——"

"Tinned pears or pineapple?" inquired Kirk, with unpleasant acuteness.

Mimi brought the rest of her offering in silence. In silence she swallowed tasteless morsels, facing for the most part inky and violent rendering of the evening news, manipulated with the ease of long practice by Kirk's brown left hand while he handled a fork with his right.

"Anything in the paper?" asked Mimi at length.

"About as much as usual."

"Have a hard day at the office?"

"Why this unexpected interest in the office?" Kirk answered coolly. "I think you told me only yesterday you never wanted to hear the word again."

"Oh, Kirk!" said Mimi unhappily.

But it was true. She had told him just that. He had been late getting off in the morning. His breakfast hadn't been ready on time. He had complained that he was always the last man to get down to work, and she had told him that she was sick of hearing how late he was; that he stayed there long enough after hours to make up for it, and that she never wanted to hear the word "office" again. All of which didn't quite make for extended and amiable discussion of office affairs just now.

Kirk added unexpectedly: "Hard enough! I suppose you put in a nerve-racking afternoon at a movie."

It was the sort of thing they customarily indulged in, the kind of half-sparring, half-nagging that had come to be second nature with them. Mimi felt despair rise in her soul like a black wave. Were they really so far out of each other's reach that this was all their means of communication?

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SITTING with both elbows on the table, chin in hands, eyes fixed on the neglected sweetness of her tea-roses, Mimi fell to dreaming of the room in which Mac and the gray girl would be eating their first dinner alone.

A big room, most likely, and most likely overlooking the drive, with a view of the river, dark and misty, jeweled with lights. There would be a window seat piled with cushions, where the two of them would sit after dinner, his arm about her shoulders, looking down upon a vainly drifting world, and he would say:

"It makes everything worth while—having you to work for."

And she would answer, "I'm so proud of you! You'll never know. I want to tell every one I meet on the street what a wonderful person you are."

Whereupon he would whisper, close to her ear, "Shall we ever get used to it, I wonder—being here like this?"

And she would murmur, just beneath his chin, "You may; I shan't! No, no, we'll neither of us ever get used to it, will we?"

Was that what Mac and the gray girl would be saying? Or wasn't it something that Mimi and Kirk had said once, ever so long ago—three years ago.

Kirk was speaking now, the irritation in his voice a trifle deepened.

"No coffee tonight?"

"I'll get it," said Mimi quickly. And cleared away the dishes and brought the two little cups with unsteady hand.

"No sugar in the house?" asked Kirk at this point, with strained politeness.

She fetched the sugar.

"Kirk," she offered, with a conciliating hand on his shoulder as she passed him, "Kirk, wasn't the stew rather good tonight?"

"Good enough," said Kirk briefly.

It took all Mimi had of control not to tell him in that thwarted, affronted moment that she had done forever with cooking stews or anything else for his table.

"Selfish!" she stormed to herself, "selfish and stupid and hard as nails! He doesn't see anything that I'm trying to tell him. He doesn't care any more. It's no good, my humbling myself for nothing. I made a hideous mistake when I married him, and that's all there is to it!"

But she didn't say it aloud. Something doggedly, childishly hopeful, held her back. She told him instead:

"Go on in the living room and sit down. I'll do the dishes."

To a speech like that from the gray girl Mac would undoubtedly have replied, with laconic tenderness, "You will not! I'll wash and you wipe." Or, better yet, "Sit down yourself, young lady, and see how it's done!"

Kirk merely paused in the doorway to answer casually, "All right. I've got a headache." Then disappeared, still bearing the newspaper and feeling for his cigarette case.

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MIMI turned the faucet on the pile of plates in the sink with coldly viciously little fingers. She threw all that remained of the stew into the discard—not a great deal, at that. Kirk had eaten where he had not praised, and above the scattered remnants of potato and pear she muttered grimly:

"Well, call it a day! I'm through!"

Still, she left the tiny kitchen cleaner than usual. There was a vague relief in pouring streams of boiling water upon the debris of her misprized dinner, a nebulous satisfaction in creating horrid dissonances with pots and lids.

If all of life were only so simple! If boiling water were all that one needed to erase the work of the moving finger! If banging pots about could ease a wounded heart as it erased a straining temper! Call it a day—and what a day!

Mimi hung her last dishcloth, kicked the kitchen chair aside, and went into the living room.

Kirk was slouching low in his especial corner of the deep settee, smoking—smoking and staring at nothing. The newspaper lay on his knees. He caught it up as a man might catch up a mask at Mimi's approach, as at the approach of an enemy.

She inquired courteously, "How's your headache?"

He didn't answer. Perhaps he hadn't heard her. Perhaps he had.

Mimi shrugged and walked over to the window, their widest window, which gave upon a street lined with brown and gray houses—the same sort of houses as the one in which Mimi and Kirk lived. All the other houses showed lighted windows of their own.

"With just about this same sort of thing going on behind all the tidy little window curtains," though Mimi bitterly. She twisted the tassel of the shade about a restless finger. "If there were some big reason for it, I wouldn't care so much. There'd be some dignity about losing a man to another woman! Or because he'd gone down with a boat. Or up with a train. But to have him—I did have Kirk at first! We were crazy happy. We were like a couple of kids. To have him and lose him like this! To lose all the lovely side of him and be left with a stranger on my hands—a stranger who doesn't even like me—as I don't even——"

But she couldn't pretend she didn't even like the stranger. She couldn't make herself say it even to herself. Desolation overwhelmed her at the realization of how much she did like him in spite of everything.

She glanced back over her shoulder at Kirk. He had dropped the paper once more. He was lighting a fresh cigarette. He was smoking too much, always a sign of overstrain with him.

Mimi said before she could stop herself, "I thought you were going to cut out smoking for a while?"

"Did you?" said Kirk.

Hopeless—worse than hopeless! She couldn't make him hear her across the gulf. His eyes rested on her without seeing her.

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WELL, Mimi had made her little effort. She had held out her futile olive branch. Kirk hadn't so much as been aware of it. He hadn't recognized her flag of truce—hadn't cared enough to recognize it.

Blind and deaf and cold he was! Let him go his own way and she'd go hers. Love was dead between them. There wasn't a chance in the world of getting back the dream.

Mac and the gray girl might have better luck. Across yellow-windowed houses, across dark, roaring streets, to that imagined room ovelooking the lights on the river, Mimi sent her sardonic felicitations:

"I hope you'll be happy—while it lasts!"

She turned away from the window. She took a book from a little table and tucked it under one arm.

In the doorway leading to the bedroom she stopped, because Kirk called her name suddenly.

"Mimi, where are you going?"

"I'm going to bed."

"What for? It's only 8 o'clock."

She looked at him in silence—a small, listless figure—wearily, resentfully conscious in that moment of her rumpled frill, her rumpled hair, her shiny elbows, her shabby skirt that needed pressing. Perhaps, after all, what a man wanted was prettiness, properly cared for. The gray girl—exquisite as a flower just lifted out of a florist's box. No wonder Mac's eyes had been ardent and deep. If Mimi had done her hair again and changed into the rose georgette, instead of dashing out to spend her soul upon that wretched stew——

In silence, oddly awkward, Kirk looked back at her.

He saw her now. Oh, yes, beyond question he saw her. He looked at her as if he were feeling about in his mind for something he wanted to say to her. If it were something sarcastic and critical about her hair or her clothes, Mimi felt she couldn't stand it. There were tears behind her eyelids—tears of defeat.

And there sat Kirk, groping, with actually a half-smile on his lips, for whatever it was that eluded him. Groping—Kirk, too? Funny, if that were possible.

Mimi came slowly back. She stood beside the settee, looking down at him without a word.

"Sorry I was cross, honey!"

The old tone! She hadn't heard it in months. It had been months since Kirk had apologized for being cross to her or she to him.

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SHE murmured an unintelligible reply. To herself she was praying fiercely over and over again, "Don't cry. You know how he hates it. Don't cry!"

"Came home with a rotten headache." Kirk reached up one hand and Mimi let him have hers to hold, still wordless. "Been working too hard, I guess. I hadn't told you—I was afraid I couldn't put it over—Polton, the fellow in charge of the office, is resigning, going to California to live. Chance for me to step into his shoes. I'm almost certain of it now from something the old man said to me today. Didn't mean to tell you till I had it cinched, but——"

"But what?" asked Mimi unsteadily.

He drew her fingers across his cheek with a gesture her heart remembered—grinned, half-shamefaced.

"Oh, I had sort of a lonesome streak tonight."

"Lonesome, Kirk? For whom?" Another fear to face!

"For you," said Kirk simply. "I used to tell you everything. Don't you know I did? All the stuff about the office, and all that, until I got to thinking you didn't care for it. Mimi, you didn't mean what you said the other day about never wanting to hear——"

Mimi put their two hands across his lips.

"I've been an ill-tempered little beast," she said, passionately, "and a blind little fool—and you shall have your breakfast on time if I have to stay up all night to get it!"

Kirk pulled her down beside him and cuddled her head on his shoulder.

"That was a darned good stew!" he admitted with sporting generosity.

Mimi felt his lips on her hair and drew a long, relaxing sigh.

She knew now that the fog which shut her in had shut him in, too. He had been looking for her, as she for him. One had merely to go on calling and seeking till it lifted. A matter of faith—and a gallant heart!

"There were mushrooms in the stew," she said peacefully, with her cheek on Kirk's lapel.

"I know it was different somehow." Mimi wisely said nothing of the he assured her proudly.

tear.

He kissed her hair again and the end of one eyebrow, tipped up her face and kissed her on the mouth with a kind of hungry tenderness.

"Got on a new dress tonight, haven't you?" he whispered. "Looks like a million!"

(Copyright, 1924.)

BLIND AND DEAF AND COLD HE WAS! LET HIM GO HIS OWN WAY.

Fox-Trot Ousts Other Paris Dances

Rhythm of the Tom-Tom, World's Oldest Type, Turns Participants Into Solemn Performers Who Forget All Except the Music That Attracts Them.

BY STERLING HEILIG.

PARIS, September 4.

FOX-TROT. "From One to Two. I Always Dream of You." (This number free from all tax.) We are in Paris at the most elegant dancing of the Bois. Beyond a tiny lake and bits of lawn. A forest vista shows the line of motor cars arriving continually at the white portals of a sylvan establishment.

Americans. English, prosperous Parisians and pleasure-seekers from everywhere quit their cars and make for the open-air dance floor of Armenonville, under the trees. Inside the luxurious restaurant is empty, yet it is tea time.

So this is Paris with the lid off! Capital of bright and naughty gayety, of pop, sparkle and flirtation, of passion and fatality, laughter and chatter!

The scene is truly fairylike. But where is the laughter and chatter? At a hundred little tables around the dance floor young folks, middle-aged and elderly sit, rapt, staring, silent.

All eyes are on the crowd of dancers, moving just so in the fox-trot, each step just so. All ears listen in a tense contentment to the trap-drum man of Billy Henly's jazz band intone through the megaphone that:

"Life and Love Seem Sweeter After the Storm!"

(Fox-trot. This number free from all tax.)

Fifty couples move to it as in a daze—mechanically, correctly, walking with deliberation, just so, as if wound up and glad of it, without laughter, without languor.

The dances are short and begin again in half a minute. The couples stand where they stopped and do not say a word to each other. They are in a geometric dream—a dream of rhythm. It is individual, not dual. The hypnotic joy of each is safe in a water-tight compartment.

I got it from a smooth French subdirector at Armenonville, who whispered: "Are you for the Society of Authors?" as I leaned over the pianist's shoulder to read the song's name:

"Everybody's Sweetheart, but Nobody's Gal!"

(Fox-trot. This number free from all tax.)

That song's slogan told the whole tale.

"No," I answered. "I am interested in the dancing. It seems different."

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"FOX-TROTS," he said, "are not French manufacture. The Society of Authors gets no copyright, as all this music comes straight from America. They won't have anything but fox-trots. It's the easiest of dances. Any one can walk through it. The tango looks like you could walk through it, but it takes skill. Also, there's a new thing."

"New thing?"

"Big new thing. See that—and that?" He pointed to the trombone and the trap-drum. "It's the tom-tom!" whispered the smooth Frenchman. "When I was in Senegal with the Colonials I saw whole villages by the full moon dance till they fell exhausted—solemn dancing, believe me!—to the rhythm of the tom-tom. It compels, and it is pure," said the smooth Frenchman. "It is the first and oldest dance in all the world. Each one dances in his own dream to the tom-tom. And here it is in Paris!"

In 65 Parisian "dancings" of the first class, and in 285 establishments of good tone, so classed by the prefecture of police, the jazz craze has worked its way.

French bands import and play the American music. In fact, it is reprinted and jobbed by French speculators. "Runnin' Wild! Fox-trot et Blues," was going strong at the Jardin d'Acclimatation (a kind of zoo) at Neuilly-sur-Seine (which is west-end Paris) yesterday afternoon. And "Take a Little One-step!" was being encored at the Butte de Chaumont, six miles across Paris, in the east end, the week previous. As I left they were dancing "Cover Me Up with the Sunshine of Virginia."

When the Prince of Wales danced till 4 a.m. at the "Embassy Club," formerly "The Garden of My Sister," in the Rue Caumartin (which is plum-central Paris) his favorite fox-trot was "The Hoodoo Man."

Doubtless he did a tango. Doubtless he did a Boston or two. He is a strong young man. But here is a strange thing: The young fellows who are the ginger of Parisian dance floors yield to fox-trot purity, as you might say, against their interest or intent.

Voluptuousness marked the old Parisian dances, but the fox-trot has abolished all but fox-trot, tango and Boston. The Boston scarcely counts. The tom-tom hypnotizes men and girls to virtuous automata!

Certain French cake-eaters have tried to retain the Boston as a voluptuous dance, but the clear-eyed boys who carry the ginger make it otherwise. They came to scoff, but they remained to pray. Jazz makes them jumping-jacks to slow time, pure in heart.

So my smooth French specialist insists.

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WHEN a tango is played the Spanish and the South Americans are seen to rise to dance. The Paso-Doblo is the favorite of the King of Spain, which gives it certain prestige, even in Paris. It is the one dance the King dances, according to Oscar Mouvet, who took "The Embassy Club's" orchestra to Madrid on order of American Ambassador Moore.

But all Americans and English, the entire French contingent and most foreigners cut tango and Boston. Fox-trot is the one dance.

Strange thing to happen to the city with the lid off! The trap-drum man pulls the strings. Dancing couples and entranced spectators yield alike to rhythm.

Tum! tump-a-tum! tum! tump!

Under influence of the jazz band there is only "tum! tump!" in the universe—pure rhythm, often fancifully syncopated (as our ancestors tapped on the village drum); just rhythm only, free from sex or sentiment, or love or laughter. Tum! tump!

Move to tum! tump! Hear it. Watch the couples move just so, quite simple steps, but always to the drum!

Do you not recognize the jazz drum?

It's the tribal drum of our far ancestors. Such is the secret of jazz. The drum man dominates all else. It is deep down in the ancestry of all of us, before the races differentiated.

Humanity's first collective emotion, completely personal, intensely individual, enjoyed each on his own and yet in common with the mass of others—is that stirred, first, last and always by the "tum! tum!" of the tom-tom!

The purity of heart which jazz has brought to Paris is seen at the pinnacle of these establishments.

Maurice, the dancer, has presumed to call his place "The Embassy Club"? But how object, since the ambassador has honored it, with Prince of Wales, King of Rumania, Shah of Persia, King of the Belgians and Grande Duchess of Luxenburg.

It is a night restaurant where they dance. To general surprise, the very best began to figure in it—names like the Duc and Duchesse d'Ayen, Princesse de Polignac, Duchesse Decazes, the Cole Porters, the Laurens Morgan Hamiltons, Lady Cunard, Mrs. George Gould, jr.; Count Henri de Mun, Mrs. Frederick Havemeyer, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Bate and Capt. L'Hopital, aide-de-camp of Marshal Foch. Such names are mere samples.

THEY come to dance the fox-trot. "They will hardly get up for a tango or Boston," says Oscar Mouvet. But middle-aged men, like Berry Wall and Harry Lehr, are so strong for dancing the fox-trot that, referring to one of the two on the night of the Prince of Wales, Oscar added that "if he did not dance his little head off, nobody did!"

As touchstone of pure rhythm, he mentioned the "blues," which are the fox-trot on a different syncopation, permitting one to dance without traveling so much, just marking time. This, I take it, is when they're breathed but won't stop.

The "blues" are the proof of the whole thing—"marking time." Why, the spectators themselves mark time, seated at their tables, nodding, tapping. They are rhythm-ridden—and here's purity of heart!

Beginning like all other dancings, the "Embassy Club" has reached the point to which the others are tending.

"If I see a man who belongs to one party trying to dance with a woman who is not of his party, I have a word with him," says Oscar Mouvet.

I thing that he does.

Yet Parisian dancings were built up on just the opposite.

Today, still, the great afternoon teas, like the Claridge and the Hermitage, employ paid dancers, and are bound to tolerate young fellows of correct manners, whose first idea is to pick up something. The "Embassy Club" itself still runs a tea dance, "catering entirely to the bourgeoisie, and very French," says Oscar.

"The tea is utterly different from the evening," he says. "At the tea I have five or six professional dancers. The French require it, because the man is busy in the afternoon and the woman goes out somewhere and drops into a dancing tea. She does not need to look foolish and ask for a dancer, because the professionals see and notice who wants to dance. They dance four or five times, and she slips him from 10 to 50 francs. In the afternoon it seems perfectly proper to me, and I stand it. In the evening my clientele is entirely different, and will not stand it."

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AS Oscar Mouvet points out, "that sort of thing is not a career," and what the young fellows pick up is growing less and less. In the flush confusion following the war rich marriages were brought off at the dancings, and "Frenchy" lightness fetched all sorts of revenue into the hands of "adroit boys and even blame fools."

The fox-trot kills it.

The lads themselves forget to look for business, hypnotized by jazz and syncopation. And a new lot, crowding the dancing teas, neglect to think of anything but fox-trot.

At beautiful Armenonville yesterday afternoon there were actually more men who sought to dance than girls and women to dance with them.

Seated near the entrance to the floor, I found it striking. In they crowded. Apart from the raft of tourists, where do all these French young men come from? They are good-mannered, well dressed, slender, straight, young, elegant, correct, and without the slightest shade of flirt.

"I see the same young fellows every day," says Billy Henley's drum man. "They are obviously of good family for the most part. I do not know if their parents give them money to come, or know that they are here. But I know the boys by sight. I see them come to the Cafe de Paris in the Winter with their families. They come here to dance—yeah, just to dance! They pick up nothing. They are no more gigolos than you and I are. It is coming to this—a queer thing for Paris!—on the dance floor there is only dancing. If you call it dancing—it's the fox-trot!"

Jazz has done it.

Tum! tum! Tom-tom!

American jazz music is making Paris pure in heart!

History of National Anthem.

(Continued from Fourth Page.)

apologized for not accommodating them on his own ship, but said that they would be well taken care of in a frigate commanded by his son, to which they were accordingly transferred.

"Mr. Key had an interview with Dr. Beanes. He found him in the forward part of the ship among the sailors and soldiers and constantly treated with indignity. Mr. Key and Mr. Skinner continued on the frigate until the fleet reached the Patapsco, when Admiral Cochrane shifted his flag to that vessel in order that he might move farther up the river. Mr. Key and Mr. Skinner were then sent on board their own little vessel with a guard of sailors and marines. They were permitted to take Dr. Beanes with them.

"They thought themselves fortunate in being anchored in a position which enabled them to see distinctly the flag of Fort McHenry. They remained on deck during the night watching every shell from the moment it was fired until it fell, and listening with breathless interest to hear if an explosion followed.

"While the bombardment continued it was sufficient proof that the fort had not surrendered. But it suddenly ceased some time before daylight, and as they had no communication with any one of the enemy ships, they did not know whether the fort had surrendered or whether the attack had been abandoned. They paced the deck for the residue of the night in painful suspense, and as soon as it dawned, their glasses were turned to the fort, uncertain whether they should see the Stars and Stripes or the flag of the enemy. At length the light came and they saw that 'our flag was still there.' And, as the day advanced they discovered from the movements of the boats that the troops had been roughly handled and that many wounded men had been carried to the ships. At length Mr. Key was informed that the attack had failed, that the army was re-embarking, and that he, Mr. Skinner and Dr. Beanes would be permitted to go where they pleased as soon as the fleet was ready to sail.

"He told me," continued Justice Taney, "that under the excitement of the time he had written a song, and handed me a printed copy. When I read it, and expressed my admiration, I asked him how, in the scenes he had been passing through, he had found time to compose such a song. He said he commenced it on deck of their vessel, in the fervor of the moment when he saw the enemy hastily retreating and looked at the flag he had watched for so anxiously as the morning opened; that he had written some lines, or brief notes that would aid him in recalling them to mind, upon the back of a letter which he happened to have in his pocket; that for some of the lines he was obliged to rely altogether on his memory, and that he had finished it in the boat on his way to shore, and wrote it out as it now stands at the hotel immediately after he reached Baltimore.

"He said that next morning he took it to Judge Nicholson, chief justice of Baltimore, whose wife was Mrs. Key's sister, to ask him what he thought of it; and that the latter was so pleased with it that he immediately sent it to a printer and directed copies to be be struck off in handbill form, and finally that he (Mr. Key) believed it to have been favorably received by the Baltimore public.

"Judge Nicholson had been a member of the garrison during the bombardment, and you may easily imagine the feelings with which he read the song and gave it to the public," concludes Justice Taney.